

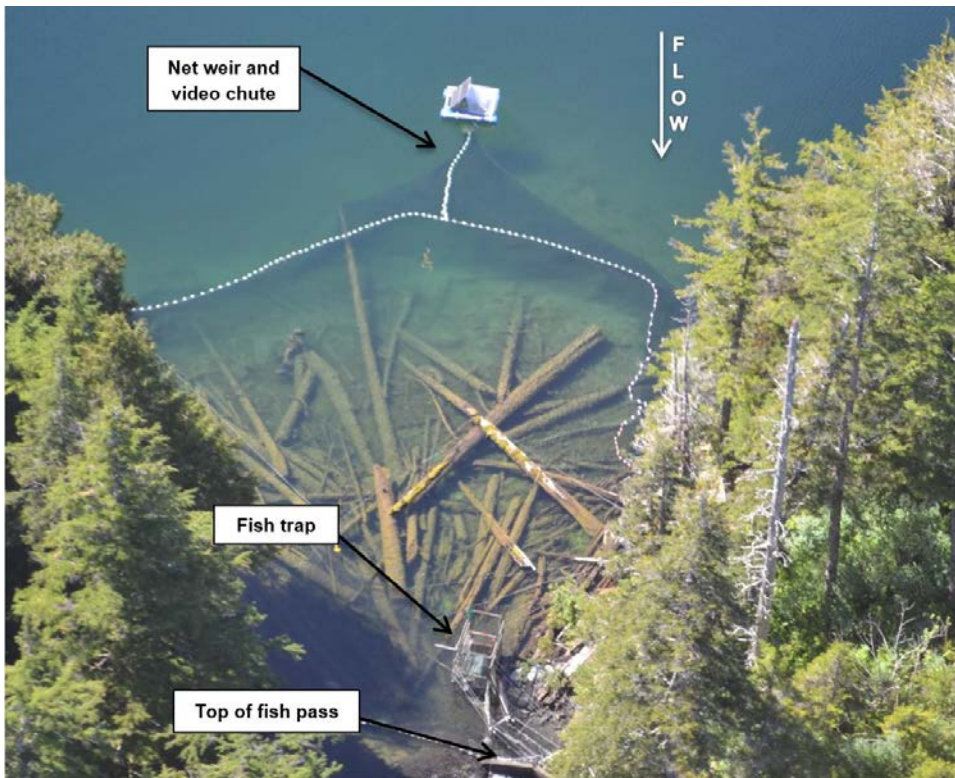
**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 29 – AUGUST 4, 2018.**

Report #10 - Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov)  
Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS.

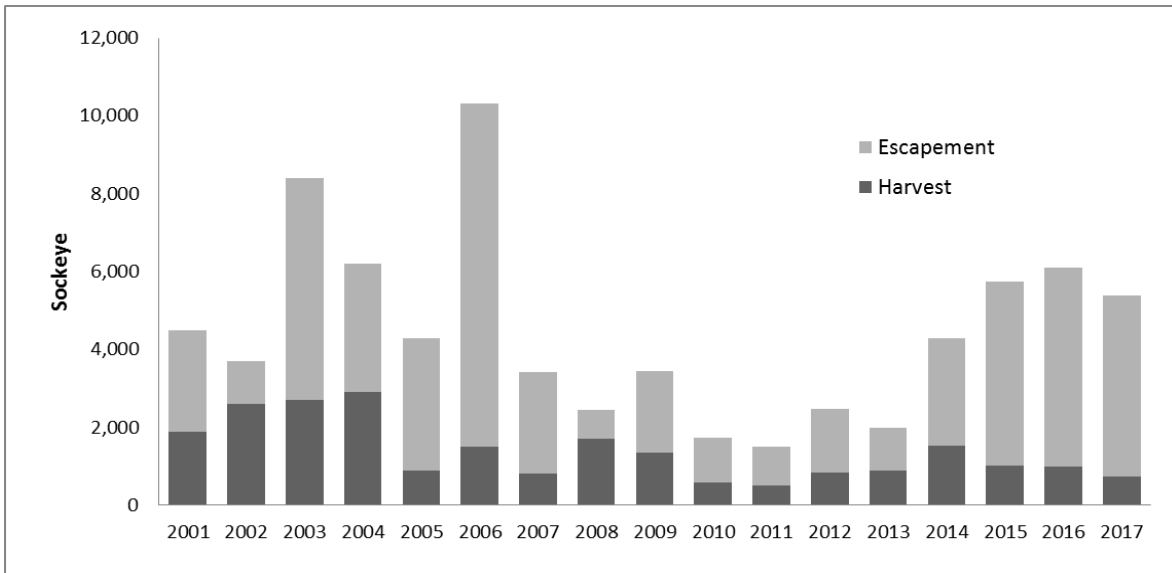
The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal in-season managers and OSM staff that provided weekly updated information by the close of business on Friday of the reporting week. My goal is to have the report sent by the close of business the following Monday. Web links have been included to provide additional information. You may obtain additional information on a fishery of particular interest by contacting the in-season manager, provided contacts, follow the provided web links, or contact me.

**SOUTHEAST ALASKA Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest** Justin Koller, (907)747-4297 [jpkoller@fs.fed.us](mailto:jpkoller@fs.fed.us)

**Falls Lake Sockeye Salmon** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which were installed June 29. As of August 5, 377 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the trap and 700 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. Escapement through the net weir is about 750 which is below average for this date. However, rain in the forecast and higher tides will likely result in increased escapement this week. The final escapement estimate in 2017 was 4,662 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 732. Subsistence harvest accounted for 89% of terminal area harvest.

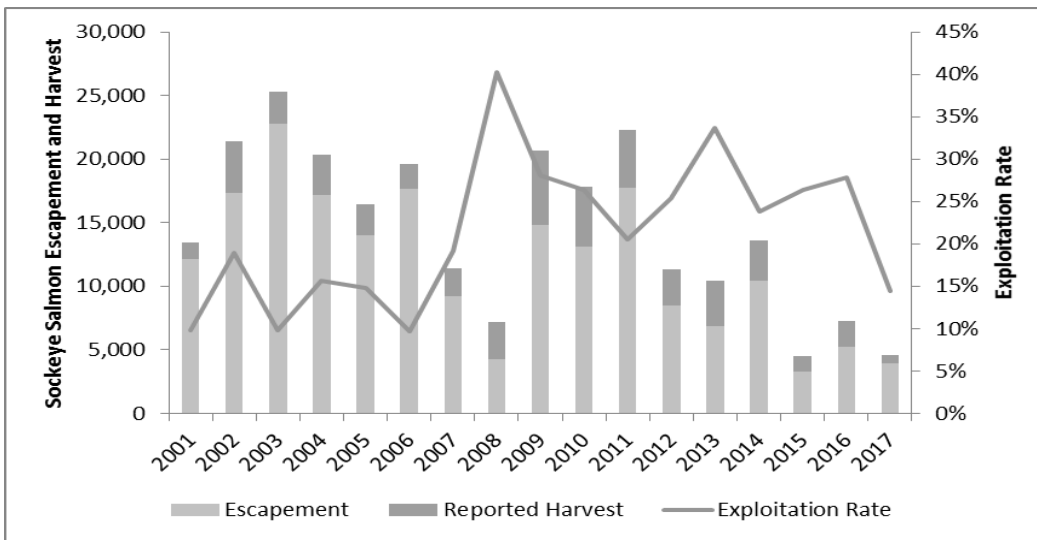


**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



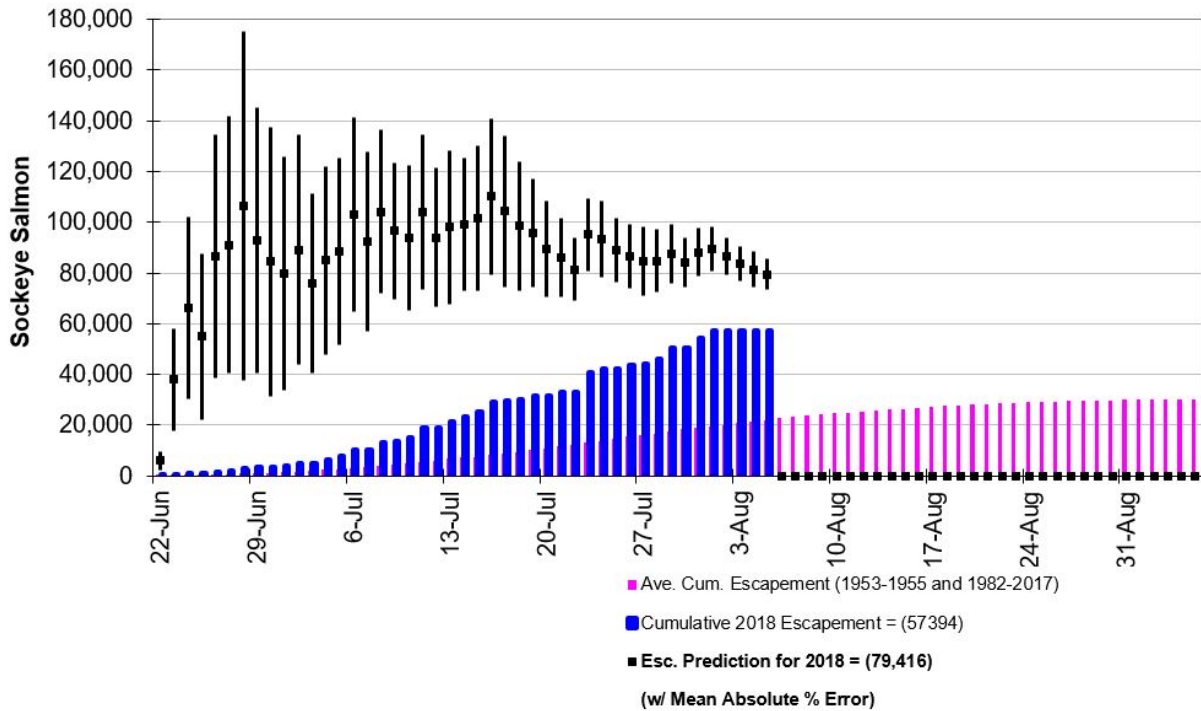
**Figure 2.** Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2017.

**Klag Bay Sockeye Salmon** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay, which was operating as of June 28. As of August 4, 95 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the weir and 880 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. Sockeye Salmon at Klag Bay generally move into the river during rain events and it has been very dry with no precipitation in the forecast until August 8. In 2017, approximately 3,898 migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,087 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fisheries. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

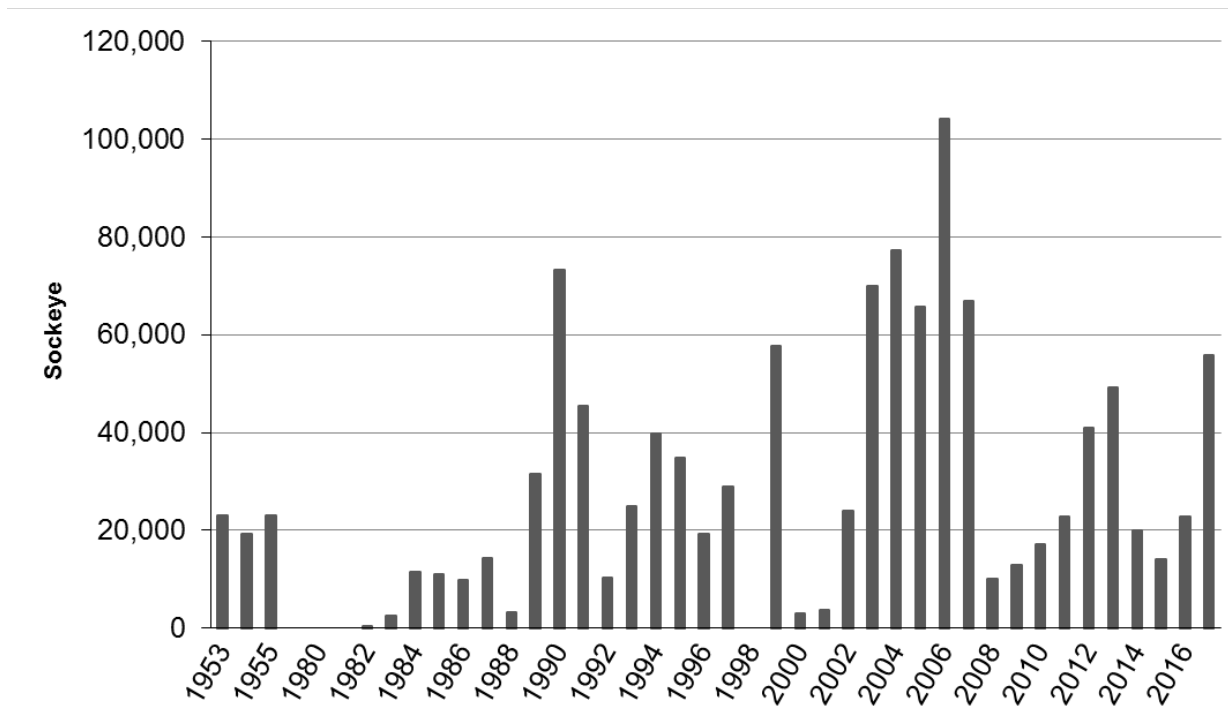


**Figure 3.** Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2017.

**Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was installed June 16. As of August 5, 57,394 Sockeye Salmon have entered the lake which is well above average. The Redoubt Lake Sockeye and Coho Salmon model is predicting that 80,000 Sockeye Salmon will return to Redoubt Lake this season (**Figure 4**). On July 11, in accordance with the Redoubt Bay and Lake Sockeye Salmon Management Plan, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game raised the subsistence limit from 10 daily and 50 annual per household to 25 daily and 100 annually per household. These limits were based on an in-season model prediction of about 95,000 returning. In 2017, at least 55,702 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake (**Figure 5**).



**Figure 4.** In season predictions of the Redoubt Lake Sockeye Salmon escapement based on weir counts through August 5.



**Figure 5.** Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2017. The weir was not operated in 1998.

**Sitka Sound Pacific Herring** – The commercial, subsistence, and spawning season for Pacific Herring in Sitka Sound occurs about mid-March through mid-April. According to preliminary accounts and data, the commercial and subsistence seasons were not successful in 2018 while the spawning season was marginally successful. The commercial fishery closed on April 3 with only about one third of the guideline harvest level (GHL) harvested. Accounts from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska indicate poor quantity and quality of subsistence harvest, and that their subsistence needs were not met. Other harvesters have said their catch rates were lower than the Tribes. Miles of shoreline receiving herring spawn indicates the spawning season was below average. However, preliminary estimates of spawn extent from shore and deposition are encouraging as related to the post spawn biomass calculation. This estimate will be available this Fall.

[Alaska Department of Fish and Game news release with a synopsis of the commercial season](#)

**Sitka Chinook Salmon** – The Chinook Salmon season in Sitka was poor for both the commercial and sport fisheries. Fishers from both groups reported below average catch rates. Management measures decreased the bag limits for resident and non-resident sport anglers and curtailed commercial fishery opportunity.

[More information on King Salmon management in Southeast Alaska.](#)

**Prince of Wales and Ketchikan District Area – Jeff Reeves, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest. (907) 826-1649 [jreeves@fs.fed.us](mailto:jreeves@fs.fed.us)**

**Prince of Wales Island/Ketchikan area**

Currently 223 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 147 have been issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users residing on Prince of Wales Island.

Subsistence fishing opportunity for Sockeye Salmon began on July 1. Prominent fisheries include: Hetta Lake, Klawock Lake, Klakas Lake, Hunter Bay, Sarkar, Karta River, Salmon Bay Lake, Red Lake, Kegan Lake, Shipley Bay, Thorne River and Hatchery Creek. Most of these fisheries closed July 31. Fishing in these areas was slower than usual, and it is anticipated that reported catches will be lower than usual.

The Hetta Lake weir has been operational since June 7, with 872 Sockeye Salmon counted at the site. The Eek Lake weir has been operational since June 12<sup>th</sup> with 7 Sockeye Salmon counted. Both projects are run by the Hydaburg Cooperative Association (HCA). HCA has requested local residents to not engage in any subsistence fishing activity at Eek until 1000 fish have been counted through the weir. The Klawock fish hatchery, operated by Southern Southeast Alaska Regional Aquaculture Association, has been in place since July 1. To date, 275 Sockeye Salmon have been counted.

All commercial fisheries net fisheries are currently active in Districts 1, 2 and 4 while commercial troll fisheries are open in Districts 1-4. The commercial troll fishery for Chinook Salmon closed on July 14, with fishing effort now being directed at Coho and Chum Salmon. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 1-4 are 3780 Chinook Salmon, 47,810 Sockeye Salmon, 31,790 Coho Salmon, 826,595 Pink Salmon and 533,000 Chum Salmon.

**Petersburg/Wrangell area**

This year's run of Chinook Salmon to the Stikine River is weak and was forecasted at 6,900 fish. This forecast is less than half of the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. Directed commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries in the area have been closed to protect this return.

Currently, all purse seine fisheries are closed in the area. The drift gillnet and commercial troll fisheries are currently open in Districts 6 and 8. Cumulative harvest to date for Districts 6-8 are: 4420 Chinook Salmon, 25,000 Sockeye Salmon, 18,700 Coho Salmon, 653,400 Pink Salmon and 363,400 Chum Salmon.

There have been 113 fishing permits issued for the Stikine River subsistence salmon fishery. Weather has been good. Participation has slowed, in part due to rising river conditions that made for challenging fishing condition in parts of the river. The

estimated cumulative subsistence harvest is 8 large Chinook, 20 Coho and 1,700 Sockeye Salmon.

Currently 223 Federal salmon/trout/char permits have been issued in the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat region. Of these, 48 have been issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users residing in the Petersburg/Wrangell area.

**Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska** - Jake Musslewhite (907-789-6256; jgmusslewhite@fs.fed.us), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest.

**Yakutat area:**

**Northern inside waters:**

**Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon:**

**Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon:**

**Southeast Alaska Web Links**

Weekly Summary author and report not available for next two weeks.

*Tongass National Forest News Room* <http://www.fs.usda.gov/news/tongass/news-events>

*Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Southeastern Alaska Area*  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf)

*ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order Link*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R1>

*ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

*Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southeast Alaska*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R1.home>

*Statewide ADF&G Fish counts*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

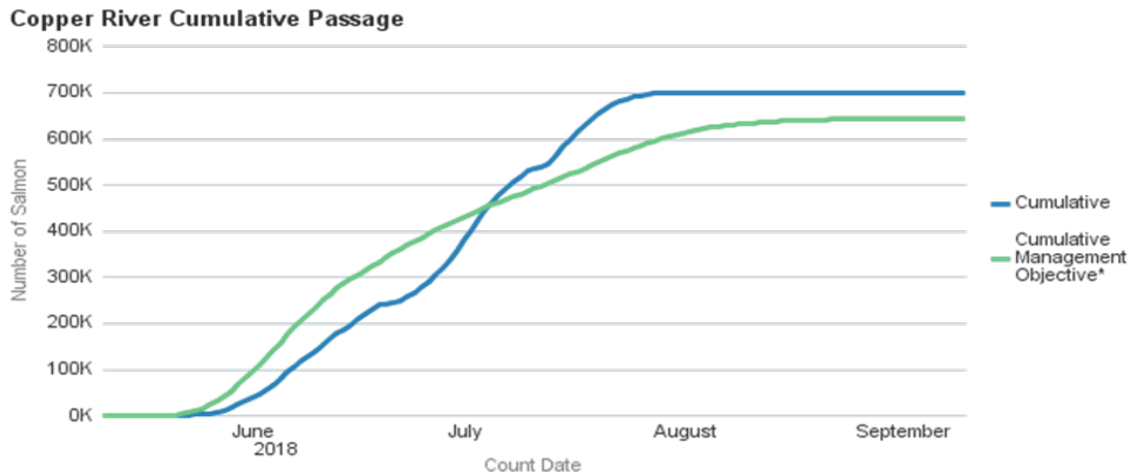
## **SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA**

### **Prince William Sound – Copper River**

**Copper River, 8/4/2018 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve, (907) 822-7281, dave\_sarafin@nps.gov**

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) discontinued data collection for the season on July 28 and provided a season passage estimate of 701,577 salmon for the season. This estimate is 17% above the cumulative management objective of 601,096 salmon for this date in the season. A daily number of 1,974 salmon was estimated to pass by the sonar counter on July 28.

## 2018 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar



Source:

[http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon\\_escapement](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement).

The Federal subsistence fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is open to fishing and expected to remain open through September 30. One hundred eight (108) Federal Chitina Subdistrict permits have been issued on the FWS online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity.



The Glennallen Subdistrict is open for Federal subsistence users and is expected to remain open until September 30. Three hundred four (304) Federal Glennallen permits have been issued on the FWS online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity.

The Batzulnetas fishery is open. One Federal permit has been issued.

Installation of the Tanada Creek fish weir was completed Thursday, June 21. The first Sockeye Salmon was recorded passing the weir on July 4. As of August 4, 3,820 Sockeye Salmon and 0 Chinook Salmon have been recorded passing the site for the season.

The Native Village of Eyak Baird Canyon fishwheels captured and tagged 5,578 Chinook Salmon through July 7. The upriver fishwheels at Canyon Creek have captured 4,125 Chinook Salmon through July 21, of which, 432 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River has reported a total passage estimate of 4,338 Chinook Salmon through August 4.

One Federal Special Action has been issued by the in season manager this season:

- Delaying the starting date of the Chitina Subdistrict Federal subsistence salmon fishery to June 1.

#### Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

[http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon\\_escapement](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement)

NVE's Chinook Escapement Monitoring project in the Copper River

<http://eyak.fishscan.com/Summary/DailySummary.aspx>

ADFG Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.harvestsummary>

ADFG Gulkana River counting tower

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.displayResults&COUNTLOCATIONID=6&SpeciesID=410>

ADFG Emergency Orders and News Releases

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2018&AreaID=33>

**PWS and Copper River Delta – Milo Burcham, Chugach National Forest, Cordova.**

(907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)

**3 August 2018**



A total of 55 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. Harvest by this year's permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. Ninety-seven permits were issued in 2017 resulting in the reported harvest of 514 Coho and 127 Sockeye Salmon from Copper River Delta fresh waters in this fishery.

**Cook Inlet Area – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office** (907) 260-0132 [Jeffrey\\_Anderson@fws.gov](mailto:Jeffrey_Anderson@fws.gov)

A total of 363 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified households through August 3. This includes 91 Kenai River permits (FFCI01) and 12 Designated Fisher permits to Cooper Landing households; 34 Kenai River permits (FFCI01) and 3 Designated Fisher permits to Hope households; and 123 Kenai River permits (FFCI01), 95 Kasilof River permits (FFCI02), and 5 Designated Fisher permits to Ninilchik households.

The 2018 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon opened on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Harvest reported to date in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 1,496 Sockeye Salmon. Harvest reported to date in the Kasilof River dip net fishery is 47 Sockeye Salmon.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and continues through August 15. Harvest reported through August 3 includes 716 Sockeye Salmon. The Kenai River community gillnet fishery began on July 1 and continues through August 15, and then from September 10 – 30. Harvest reported through August 3 is 688 Sockeye, 3 Coho, and 2 Pink salmon.

Fish counts at some Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department)-operated assessment projects are available on-line at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.home>

Alaska Department of Fish and Game emergency orders and news releases affecting upper Kenai Peninsula sport fisheries can be found at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2017&AreaID=5>

**Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR**  
(907) 487-2600/0230 or [michael\\_brady@fws.gov](mailto:michael_brady@fws.gov) or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230  
[Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto:Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov)

Subsistence fishing around the northern Kodiak Archipelago has continued to be non-existent due low Sockeye Salmon returns. Many villagers have turned their attention to hunting as the deer season opened on August 1, 2018. Some of the weirs operated by Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Commercial Fisheries Division will be pulled

between middle of August and the first week of September. It is understood that many subsistence users, who were unable to meet their harvest needs of Sockeye Salmon are waiting for the Coho (silver) Salmon to start migrating in before continuing their harvest efforts.

Pink Salmon are slowly returning to the Buskin River. Silvers are being caught by sport fishermen around Kodiak.

Any reports of subsistence activities will be reported during the upcoming week.

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kodiak Area***  
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs13/kodiak.pdf>

**BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS –  
Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office  
(907) 271-2776 Jonathon\_Gerken@fws.gov**

All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and provide the basis for any in-season assessment and management.

**Bristol Bay:**

The 2018 Bristol Bay Sockeye Salmon run is forecast to be approximately 41 to 61 million fish for nine river systems: Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak Rivers. All river met escapement goals. The commercial salmon season in Bristol Bay opened June 1. Commercial harvest as of August 1 is approximately 43 million fish for all salmon species throughout all districts.

**Chignik:**

The escapement goal for early-run Sockeye Salmon in the Chignik River drainage of 350,000 – 450,000 through July 30 was not achieved. Through Section 815 of ANILCA an Emergency special action (**8-SS-01-18**) was issued to close Federal public waters of the Chignik River drainage to the harvest of Sockeye Salmon except by Federally qualified subsistence users who are in the possession of a Social and Cultural Harvest Permit. This special action expired on August 1 and no restrictions are currently in place for Sockeye Salmon harvest on Federal public waters as the late-run Sockeye Salmon run commences.

Late-run Sockeye Salmon are tracking with the interim escapement goal for the date of August 1. To date, 173,064 late-run Sockeye Salmon were enumerated where 127,000 – 255,000 fish were forecast. There is concern regarding the strength of the late-run Sockeye Salmon run.

The Chinook Salmon count as of August 1 is 781 fish. The historical average count for this date is 2,730 fish. Based on historical run timing, approximately 93% of the escapement has occurred by July 19, and the current projected total escapement is not expected to meet escapement. Through Section 816 of ANILCA, this Emergency Special Action (**8-KS-01-18**) closes fishing for Chinook Salmon in the Federal public waters of the Chignik River drainage due to concerns about the viability of the population effective July 13. In parallel with the Federal closures, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has closed the state subsistence fishery and sport fishery for Chinook Salmon through August 9.

Escapement Goals:

Early Run Sockeye Salmon/ Black Lake	BEG = 350,000 – 450,000
Late Run Sockeye Salmon/ Chignik Lake	SEG = 200,000 – 400,000
-In-river Goal	-25,000 in August and 50,000 in September in addition to late run escapement goals
Chinook Salmon	BEG = 1,300 – 2,700
Pink Salmon – Even year	SEG = 170,000 – 280,000
Chum Salmon	SEG = 45,000 – 110,000

Alaska Peninsula:

The current commercial harvest in the Alaska Peninsula Management Area through August 1 is 5.2 million, of which 3.0 million were Sockeye Salmon. Pink and Chum Salmon catches have increased.

Escapement Goals:

Nelson River Sockeye Salmon	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000
Nelson River Chinook Salmon	BEG = 2,400 – 4,400
Late-run Bear Lake	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000

To date, the cumulative counts as of August 1 for Sockeye Salmon are:

- Nelson River = 191,006 fish, met escapement goal. (weir was removed on July 24)
- Chinook Salmon = 5,022 fish, met escapement goal.
- Bear River = 326,978 fish, 5 year average = 335,584 fish.
- Sandy River = 34,164 fish, 5 year average = 102,700 fish. (weir was removed on July 24)
- Ilnik River = 79,393 fish, 5 year average of 89,200 fish (weir was removed on July 19)
- Orzinski River = 2,707 fish, 5 year average of 18,015 fish.

Aleutian Islands.

All fisheries are forecast to meet escapement goals and provide harvest opportunity.

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Bristol Bay Area***  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf)

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Chignik Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/chignik.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/chignik.pdf)

### **Southcentral Alaska Web Links**

#### ***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

#### ***ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.R2>

#### ***ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

#### ***Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southcentral Alaska***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R2.Home>

#### ***Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

#### **Yukon River – Gerald Maschmann, Fish Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office.**

[Gerald\\_Maschmann@fws.gov](mailto:Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov) or

Fred Bue [Fredrick\\_Bue@fws.gov](mailto:Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov)

Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

The Emmonak Field Office is closed for the season. You can contact management staff at 907-455-1849 or 907-456-0406.

#### **Summer Season Update Summary**

Summer season management is over in the lower and middle Yukon.

1.6 million Summer Chum Salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar. Combined with over 425,000 Summer Chum Salmon harvested in the Districts 1 and 2 subsistence and commercial fisheries, puts the preliminary Summer Chum Salmon run size over 2 million fish for the season. The Summer Chum Salmon drainage-wide escapement goal was exceeded. However, Summer Chum Salmon escapement goals in the E.F. Andreafsky and Anvik Rivers were not met.

159,000 Chinook Salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar. Combined with approximately 5,000 Chinook Salmon harvested in the Districts 1 and 2 subsistence fishery, plus another 8,000 in the Andreafsky tributary below Pilot Station, puts the preliminary Chinook Salmon run size at roughly 172,000 fish for the season. This is near the lower end of the preseason forecast of 173,000 to 251,000 fish and tracked slightly better than 2015. The Eagle Sonar near the Canadian Border is approximately 90% complete and has a near average cumulative passage of 50,244 Chinook Salmon through August 4. Projections

are putting the Eagle sonar passage estimate between 55,000-58,000. Based on inseason stock assessment, the Canadian total allowable catch (TAC) is expected to range from 4,000 to 7,000 Chinook Salmon. When subtracting the Canadian TAC from the projected Eagle sonar estimate, it appears the 2018 Canadian final escapement may be near the middle of the Canadian Interim Management Escapement Goal (IMEG) of 42,500 to 55,000 Chinook Salmon. The Chinook Salmon escapement goal was met on the E.F. Andreafsky River and escapement goals on Chena and Salcha Rivers are expected to be met, however, high water has hindered visual counts and estimated passage will not be available until post season analysis of sonar data.

The preliminary summer season commercial harvests for Districts 1 and 2 are 426,000 Summer Chum Salmon, approximately 11,440 Chinook Salmon were caught and released, and approximately 2,821 Chinook Salmon caught and retained for personal use. The preliminary commercial harvests for Subdistrict 4-A near Kaltag are 126,500 summer chum salmon through August 1. A season total of 286 Chinook Salmon have been caught and released. A small, commercial fishery began in District 6 on July 13. 3,427 Summer Chum Salmon have been harvested, 51 Chinook Salmon have been caught and released, and 143 Chinook Salmon have been caught and retained for personal use.

### **Fall Season Outlook**

The 2018 Fall Chum Salmon preseason run projection, based on the Summer Chum to Fall Chum Salmon relationship, is for a run size range of 700,000 to 900,000 fish. This level of abundance is typically sufficient to meet escapement and subsistence needs, and provide a surplus for commercial and personal use purposes.

### **Fall Assessment Information**

Fall season assessment began in the lower Yukon on July 16 with the 6-inch Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) which has a cumulative CPUE through August 4 of 529.66, below the median of 561.61. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began on July 18 and has a cumulative CPUE through August 4 of 634.18, below the median of 777.10. The Pilot Station sonar transitioned to fall season assessment on July 19 and has a cumulative passage of 175,833, below the median of 225,338. Crew members are setting up the Chandalar River sonar at this time, and passage estimates will begin this week.

### **Fall Season Management Actions**

Effective 12:00 a.m. Monday, July 16, the Coastal District transitioned to fall season management with subsistence fishing continuing to be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Effective 3:00 p.m. Sunday, July 15, District 1 transitioned to fall season management and subsistence fishing in District 1 was opened to the lower river regulatory schedule of 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. The waters of Pastolik and Pastoliak rivers just a few miles north of Kotlik outside the Yukon River are closed to subsistence during commercial fishing periods due to illegal fishing activity. Effective 3:00 a.m. Wednesday, July 18, Districts 2 and 3 transitioned to fall season management and subsistence fishing in Districts 2 and 3 were opened 7 days per week, 24 hours a day

except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Subsistence fishermen may use gillnets with a maximum mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller in all areas during the fall season. Subdistrict 4-A transitioned to fall season management on July 31 and Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C transitioned to fall season management on July 29. Subsistence was relaxed from two, 48-hour periods per week to 5 days per week. Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C will transition to fall season management on August 7 and subsistence will be relaxed from two, 48-hour periods per week to 5 days per week.

Six fall season commercial periods have occurred in each of Districts 1 and 2 so far this season with a preliminary combined harvest of 70,500 fall chum salmon. Commercial fishing will be open 24-hours per day, seven days per week in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C on August 7. This is a small commercial fishery with an expected harvest to be around 2,000 fall chum salmon.

### **Consultation**

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2017 and spring of 2018 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders. Run outlook and possible management strategies were discussed at Federal RAC meetings and State AC meetings, the Yukon River Panel meeting, at the annual Yukon River Drainage Fishermen's Association Board meeting, and at the Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission annual meeting. On May 2, a pre-season planning meeting was held in Anchorage that brought together representatives from most Alaskan Yukon River communities to discuss the run outlook and management options. On June 26- 28, a series of public meetings were held in the Yukon River communities of Russian Mission, Shageluk, Grayling, Anvik, and Holy Cross to discuss local fisheries issues with the Lieutenant Governor, the ADF&G Commissioner, the President of TCC, the Director of the Yukon InterTribal Fish Commission, an Alaska Board of Fisheries member, and the ADF&G Subsistence Division Director as well as both State and Federal fisheries and Refuge managers.

The ninth YRDFFA weekly teleconference was held on July 31. Lower and middle Yukon River fishermen reported being done with summer season subsistence harvests because salmon abundance has tapered off. Fishermen are berry picking while waiting for fall chum salmon to enter the river. Some fishermen were satisfied with their Chinook Salmon harvest and others were short of filling their subsistence needs. Fishermen in the upper river portion of the drainage reported that some were successful harvesting Chinook Salmon. Furthermore, the fall season outlook and management strategies were discussed on recent YRDFFA teleconferences. Participants communicated the importance of the fall chum salmon run in meeting their subsistence needs due the lack of Chinook salmon in this year's harvests.

## **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

**In Season Manager – Ken Stahlnecker, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Kenneth Stahlnecker@fws.gov](mailto:Kenneth_Stahlnecker@fws.gov); (907) 543-3151 or [Lewis Coggins@fws.gov](mailto:Lewis_Coggins@fws.gov) or author Aaron Moses [Aaron Moses@fws.gov](mailto:Aaron_Moses@fws.gov)**

### **Summary:**

There were no new regulation changes, the current regulations are from the following:

Through Alaska Department of Fish and Game Emergency Order #3-S-WR-9-18, effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, July 26, 2018, the following restrictions to the mainstem Kuskokwim River subsistence salmon fishery are rescinded:

- 6-inch or less mesh requirements for subsistence gillnets;
- 25 fathom gillnet length restrictions from the mouth of the Johnson River upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River (Sections 2–5);
- The live release requirement of Chinook Salmon caught in beach seines, fish wheels, and by hook and line;
- The use of dip nets for the taking of salmon; and
- The closed waters within Kuskokuak and Old Kuskokuak sloughs and around the mouth of the Aniak River.

Subsistence fishing with gillnets will remain closed in the following tributaries:

- The Kwethluk River drainage to its confluence with Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Kasigluk and Kisaralik river drainages to their confluences with Old Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers.
- The Aniak River drainage to ADF&G regulatory markers at its confluence with the Kuskokwim River

In addition, subsistence fishing with hook and line for Chinook Salmon will remain closed within the Kwethluk, Kisaralik, Kasigluk, Tuluksak, and Aniak river drainages. Any Chinook Salmon caught must be returned to the water alive.

### **Kuskokwim Weir Chinook Counts:**

Kwethluk River weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 5, 2018 is at 2,338. In 2017 and 2016, Chinook Salmon counts for the Kwethluk River were at 7,271 and 3,232 respectively.

Kogrukluk River weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 5, 2018 is at 5,343. In 2017 and 2016, Chinook Salmon counts were at 8,596 and 6,932, respectively.



Salmon River Pitka Fork weir Chinook Salmon counts as of August 5, 2018 is at 5,317. In 2017 and 2016 Chinook Salmon counts were at 7,843 and 6,296, respectively.

**Test Fisheries:**

As of August 5, the cumulative catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of Chinook Salmon at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Bethel Test Fishery is 663. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 371 and 680, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Chum Salmon is at 8,128. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 6,667 and 3,925 respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Sockeye is at 2,225. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 2,652 and 2,317, respectively.

Cumulative CPUE for Coho is at 290. Cumulative CPUE on this date during 2017 and 2016 were 722 and 718, respectively.

**Yukon-Kuskokwim-Interior Alaska Web Links**

***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases:***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Yukon–Northern Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf)

**Kuskokwim River Updates Hosted on OSM Website**

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/kuskokwim.cfm>

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kuskokwim Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf)

***ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R3>

***ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

***Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Interior Alaska:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R3.home>

***Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

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### **Norton Sound District**

Silver salmon numbers are increasing at the towers, weirs and in commercial catches. Pink salmon abundance continues with record counts at a number of escapement projects. During four days (July 21-24), over 1.2 million pinks passed through the Nome weir, which is more than an entire season in all the previous 25 years of counting

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of Norton Sound except for the Nome Subdistrict which is on the summer schedule.

Sport Fishing: From Bald Head (Isaac's Point) to Point Romanof, king salmon fishing is closed and the use of bait is prohibited, except in the Unalakleet River drainage where the limit is 2 king salmon harvested for the year and bait is allowed. The pink salmon catch limit has been doubled to 20 fish a day and 20 pinks in possession in the Unalakleet River drainage and all marine and fresh waters from Golovin Subdistrict north to Cape Prince of Wales.

Commercial Fishing: The Norton Sound commercial chum salmon harvest of 211,000 fish has exceeded 200,000 fish for only the fourth time in history and the first time since 1983.

### ***Subdistrict 6 (Unalakleet)***

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to July 31 are 550 king, 94,000 chum, 19,000 pink, 1,400 sockeye and 10,000 silver salmon by 63 permit holders. The silver harvest is well above average for late July. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 6 PM Mondays and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays.

**Unalakleet River Floating Weir** — A cooperative project of Fish and Game, Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC), Native Village of the Unalakleet and BLM, with major funding provided by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management. Escapement goals for the weir have not yet been established. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 3,200 king, 117,000 chum, 280 sockeye and 21,000 silver salmon. The silver count is the highest for the same period in the 9-year history of the project.

**North River Tower — Camp J. B.** — A Cooperative Project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. The project has escapement goals of 1,200-2,600 kings, 25,000 pinks,

550-1,100 silvers (aerial survey) and no goal yet established for chums. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 2,500 king, 23,000 chum, 462,000 pink, 60 sockeye and 2,100 silver salmon. The silver count is well above the recent 5-year average.

### ***Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)***

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to July 31 are 13 king, 34,000 chum, 2,300 pink, 300 sockeye and 2,500 silver salmon by 22 permit holders. The silver catch has been well above average for late July. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 6 PM Mondays and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays.

**Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has no escapement goals established. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 1,035 king, 48,000 chum, 789,000 pink, and 20,000 silver salmon. The silver count is double the previous best count for this date in the 4-year history of the project.

### ***Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)***

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: Cumulative catches to July 31 are 42 king, 14,000 chum, 900 pink, 100 sockeye, and 20 silver salmon harvested by 13 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is average, but it is early in the season. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 6 PM Mondays and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays.

**Inglutalik River Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 195 king, 28,000 chum, 19,000 pink, 93 sockeye and 1,100 silver salmon. The silver count is below the 5-year average.

### ***Subdistrict 3 (Elim)***

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to July 31 are 118 king, 36,000 chum, 8,000 pink, 160 sockeye, and 230 silver salmon harvested by 32 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is above average for this early in the season. Commercial fishing opened for weekly two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Saturdays until 6 PM Mondays and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays.

**Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel** – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has escapement goals of 250 kings, 11,500 – 23,000 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). The cumulative counts to August 2 were 75 king, 41,000 chum, 1.8 million pink, 6 sockeye and 2,100 silver salmon. The silver count is better than all years except 2006 when there was no commercial fishing due to the lack of a buyer.

### ***Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)***

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week in all marine and fresh waters of the Subdistrict.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catches to July 31 are 31 king, 24,000 chum, 3,300 pink, 60 sockeye and 100 silver salmon harvested by 16 permit holders. The silver harvest is above average and it is still early in the season. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 6 PM Saturdays until 9 PM Mondays and from 6 PM Wednesdays until 6 PM Fridays.

**Fish River Tower** - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 72 king, 44,000 chum, 2.5 million pink, 18 sockeye and 2,200 silver salmon. It is still early for the silver run.

### ***Subdistrict 1 (Nome)***

Pink salmon counts are starting to fall after a record breaking season.

Subsistence Fishing: By regulation, the summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule went into effect in the Nome Subdistrict on June 15. The marine waters east of Cape Nome continue to be open seven days a week. All Nome Subdistrict freshwater subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome are open to gillnet fishing for five days each week from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required, and stream specific harvest limits are listed on the permit. There are no catch limits in the marine waters. Also effective June 15, beach seining for salmon opened in all subsistence areas of the Nome Subdistrict whenever subsistence gillnet fishing is open. Unless closed by emergency order, beach seining will remain open during gillnet fishing periods through August 15. Dip nets and cast nets can also be used anytime gillnet fishing is open.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch to July 31 is 8 king, 9,000 chum, 2,400 pink, 70 sockeye and 160 silver salmon by 5 permit holders. The silver salmon catch is off to a good start. Commercial fishing opened for two 48-hour periods per week from 9 PM Fridays until 9 PM Tuesdays until and from 9 PM Tuesdays until 9 PM Thursdays. The Tuesday through Thursday period this week was extended for 24 hours because rough sea conditions prevented permit holders from fishing. That period would remain open until 9 PM Friday, August 3, when the fishing schedule would resume.

**Solomon River Weir** – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 1 king, 3,200 chum, 434,000 pink, 3 sockeye and 80 silver salmon.

**Bonanza River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have yet been established. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 3 king, 6,700 chum, 847,000 pink, 180 sockeye and 180 silver salmon.

**Eldorado River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 6,000 – 9,200 chum salmon. Cumulative counts to August 2 were 31 king, 42,000 chum, 191,000 pink, and 47 silver salmon.

**Nome River Weir** – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,900 – 4,300 chum salmon and 13,000 pink salmon. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 38 king, 3,800 chum, 3 million pink, 61 sockeye and 380 silver salmon. The previous pink record was 1.2 million set in 2008. The lower river is still packed with pinks and they are backed up in the ocean trying to get in the river mouth. The silver count is off to the best start in more than 10 years.

**Snake River Weir** – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 1,600 – 2,500 chum salmon. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 1 king, 2,400 chum, 435,000 pink, 5 sockeye and 6 silver salmon.

### **Port Clarence District**

Subsistence Fishing: Gillnet and beach seining are open 7 days a week. Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required for the Port Clarence District, Pilgrim River drainage and Salmon Lake. Catch limits are listed on the subsistence permits. On July 10, ADF&G announced waiving the subsistence sockeye salmon catch limit in the Pilgrim River since sockeye escapement was ensured. The escapement count at the weir on July 10 was 7,000 sockeyes. The escapement goal range at Salmon Lake is 4,000 to 8,000 sockeyes determined by aerial count.

Commercial Fishing: The department expects the commercial fishery to remain closed because of a lack of buyer interest despite the in-river goal of 30,000 sockeye salmon in Pilgrim River being expected to be reached.

**Pilgrim River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. It has an escapement goal of 4,000-8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & the Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake. The cumulative counts to August 2 were 76 king, 22,000 chum, 41,000 pink and 26,000 sockeye salmon. The historical average 90% point of the sockeye passage at the weir is August 3.

## **Kotzebue District**

Subsistence Fishing: No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2018.

Commercial Fishing: The commercial catch to August 2 was 242,000 chum salmon by 78 permit holders. That was nearly 60% ahead of last year at the same date.

**Kobuk River Test Fish** - Fish & Game project. Chum catches have recently shot up at the project and are tracking above the long-term average.

*Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for the Kotzebue Area*  
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>